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September 10, 2007

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**ON LAND USE**

The Committee on Land Use held a meeting on September 10, 2007, with Vice Chairman Maryann Heuston presiding and Committee Member Alderman Tomas Taylor also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen John Connolly, Robert Trane and William White, Michael Lambert from the Mayor's Office, Monica Lamboy, Phil Ercolini, Madeline Masters and Martha Tai from SPCD, and interested members of the public.

Chairman Heuston noted that there were questions raised at the last meeting and inquired whether, or not, the most recent version of the proposed zoning would require the issuing of a new notice. Ms. Lamboy informed the members that the Solicitor's Office informed her that the notice was adequate so that the committee could proceed. She noted, however, that some modifications might be made to tighten up the ordinance and that would require a new notice.

Ms. Lamboy reviewed the responses to the earlier questions, (copy attached), telling the members that the plan was always to make the project pedestrian friendly, therefore, the Planning Department "would like the opportunity to prepare additional amendments relative to ground floor parking". Ms. Lamboy noted that the ordinance does not prohibit a parking garage, but said that the City would have to look at the need for it. Chairman Heuston remarked that parking garages are often used for transit, thereby taking activity away from the square. Alderman White suggested that a parking sticker or a time limit for parking might be utilized to control transit parking. Alderman Connolly spoke about the parking garage in Davis Square and said that the area merchants have a wealth of demographic information that might be useful when considering a garage in Union Square.

On the issue of a PUD requiring more than a one-building development, Alderman White suggested that the underlying zoning might have to be changed to allow the construction of single buildings through the special permit with site plan review process.

Chairman Heuston said that the real impact of the development, with respect to building heights, would be to Ward 2 residents and that she is concerned that these residents will be "boxed" in. Ms. Masters stated that the regular city zoning ordinance states that the setback is 30' from the district line and any portion of

the district within that zone would have a height restriction of 3 stories. Ms. Lamboy told the members that the Planning Department does not want to proscribe the development and would prefer that the developers come up with creative solutions. Ms. Lamboy asked the committee members for their thoughts and Alderman Connolly replied that it is difficult to judge the project without some sort of physical model before them. He asked that SPCD provide a 3-dimensional model for review. Ms. Tai told the members that those models are typically provided by the developers, and as yet, there are no developers on board. She also noted that there is software available to produce a model, but that the software is expensive and the development of the model is a job in itself.

Chairman Heuston asked SPCD to review the plan again, taking into consideration the suggestions made tonight, noting that this would most likely re-trigger the date and allow SPCD to obtain further public input and to perhaps find a way to produce a model.

Alderman Taylor's motion *that the Administration develop a task force to work with the Planning Department to develop a zoning plan for Union Square* was approved. Chairman Heuston suggested she and Alderman Taylor meet with the Administration to make their concerns known. Alderman Taylor asked that the Administration provide a time frame for completing the zoning and also requested that the matter of parking in Union Square be looked at and not delayed because of any re-triggering of the dates. Mr. Lambert told the members that the Administration feels that it knows what the issues are and that this project is of the highest priority.

In closing the meeting, Chairman Heuston cautioned that without the Green Line in Union Square, the best development would just sit there.

No Papers were acted on.

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Alderman Maryann Heuston, Vice Chairman  
Committee on Land Use

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee on Land Use,  
September 10, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk